

We claim:

1. A pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist region, a back waist region, a crotch region which extends between and connects said waist regions, a longitudinal direction and a lateral direction, said absorbent article comprising

5 a) an absorbent chassis which defines an exterior surface, an interior surface opposite said exterior surface, a pair of laterally opposed side edges and a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges; and

b) a pair of opposed side panels which extend outward from and between said side edges of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region and said back waist region of said absorbent article to define a waist opening and a pair of leg openings in said pant-like disposable absorbent article, wherein each of said opposed side panels defines a first side margin which is permanently attached to said side edge of said absorbent chassis in one of said front waist region or said back waist region of said absorbent article to provide a permanent joint and a second side margin which is refastenably attached to said side edge of said absorbent chassis in said other waist region of said absorbent article to provide a refastenable joint.

2. The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said absorbent chassis comprises:

a) an outer cover;

b) a bodyside liner which is connected to said outer cover in a superposed relation; and

5 c) an absorbent core disposed between said outer cover and said bodyside liner.

3. The absorbent article of claim 1 and further comprising a fastener located on each of said second side margins of said side panels which is refastenably engaged with said exterior surface of said absorbent chassis in said other waist region to provide said refastenable joint.

4. The absorbent article of claim 3 wherein said fasteners are hook and loop type fasteners.

5. The absorbent article of claim 3 and further comprising at least one attachment panel which is located on said exterior surface of said absorbent chassis wherein said fasteners are refastenably engaged to said attachment panel.

6. The absorbent article of claim 3 wherein said absorbent chassis includes an outer cover which provides said exterior surface of said absorbent chassis and wherein said fasteners are refastenably engaged directly to said outer cover of said absorbent chassis.

7. The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said second side margins of said side panels are refastenably attached to said side edges of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region of said absorbent article to provide said refastenable joints and wherein said first side margins of said side panels are ultrasonically bonded to said side edges of said absorbent chassis in said back waist region to provide said permanent joints.

8. The absorbent article of claim 1 wherein said side panels are a neck-bonded laminate material.

9. A pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist region, a back waist region, a crotch region which extends between and connects said waist regions, a longitudinal direction and a lateral direction, said absorbent article comprising:

a) an absorbent chassis which defines an exterior surface, an interior surface opposite said exterior surface, a pair of laterally opposed side edges and a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges; and

b) a pair of opposed back panels which are permanently attached to said side edge of said absorbent chassis in said back waist region of said absorbent article; and

c) a pair of opposed front panels which are refastenably attached to said side edge of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region of said absorbent article to provide a refastenable joint wherein said front panel and said back panel on each side edge of said absorbent chassis are connected together along a side seam to define a waist opening and a pair of leg openings and provide said pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article.

10. The absorbent article of claim 9 wherein each of said side seams defines a lateral outboard edge of said article.

11. The absorbent article of claim 9 and further comprising a fastener located on each of said front panels which is refastenably engaged with said exterior surface of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region to provide said refastenable joint.

12. The absorbent article of claim 11 wherein said fasteners are hook and loop type fasteners.

13. The absorbent article of claim 11 and further comprising at least one attachment panel which is located on said exterior surface of said absorbent chassis wherein said fasteners are refastenably engaged to said attachment panel.

14. The absorbent article of claim 11 wherein said absorbent chassis includes an outer cover which provides said exterior surface and wherein said fasteners are refastenably engaged directly to said outer cover.

15. A pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist region, a back waist region, a crotch region which extends between and connects said waist regions, a longitudinal direction and a lateral direction, said absorbent article comprising:

a) an absorbent chassis which defines an exterior surface, an interior surface opposite said exterior surface, a pair of laterally opposed side edges and a pair of longitudinally opposed waist edges;

b) a pair of opposed side panels which extend between said side edges of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region and said back waist region of said absorbent article to define a waist opening and a pair of leg openings in said pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article, wherein each of said opposed side panels defines a first side margin which is permanently attached to said side edge of said absorbent chassis in one of said front waist region or said back waist region of said absorbent article to provide a permanent joint and a second side margin which is refastenably attached to said side edge of said absorbent chassis in said other waist region of said absorbent article to provide a refastenable joint;

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c) a fastener located on said second side margin of each of said side panels which is releasably engaged with said exterior surface of said absorbent chassis in said other waist region to provide said refastenable joint; and

20 d) a releasable bond located on each of said second side margins which releasably bonds said second side margins of said side panels to said side edges of said absorbent chassis in said other waist region to assist in maintaining said pant-like, disposable absorbent article in a prefastened condition.

16. The absorbent article of claim 15 wherein said absorbent chassis comprises:

a) an outer cover;

b) a bodyside liner which is connected to said outer cover in a superposed relation; and

5 c) an absorbent core disposed between said outer cover and said bodyside liner.

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17. The absorbent article of claim 15 wherein said fasteners are hook and loop type fasteners.

18. The absorbent article of claim 15 and further comprising at least one attachment panel which is located on said exterior surface of said absorbent chassis wherein said fasteners are refastenably engaged to said attachment panel.

19. The absorbent article of claim 16 wherein said fasteners are refastenably engaged directly to said outer cover of said absorbent chassis.

20. The absorbent article of claim 15 wherein said second side margins of said side panels are refastenably attached to said side edges of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region of said absorbent article to provide said refastenable joints.

21. The absorbent article of claim 15 wherein each of said side panels includes a front panel attached to said side edges of said absorbent chassis in said front waist region and a back panel attached to said side edges of said absorbent chassis in said back waist region, wherein said front panel and said back panel are connected together along a side seam which extends between said waist opening and said leg opening to provide said pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article.

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22. The absorbent article of claim 21 wherein each of said side seams defines a lateral outboard edge of said article.

23. The absorbent article of claim 15 wherein said releasable bonds include at least one point bond.

24. The absorbent article of claim 15 wherein said releasable bonds are ultrasonic bonds.

25. The absorbent article of claim 15 wherein said releasable bonds define a peel strength of no more than about 1500 grams.

26. A pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article which defines a front waist region, a back waist region, a crotch region which extends between and connects said waist regions, an absorbent chassis which defines a pair of opposed side edges and a pair of opposed waist edges, wherein said pant-like, disposable absorbent article is made by a process which comprises:

- a) providing a continuous web of interconnected absorbent chassis;
- b) permanently attaching a pair of laterally opposed back panels to said side edges of each of said absorbent chassis in one of said front waist region or said back waist region to provide a permanent joint;
- c) refastenably attaching a pair of laterally opposed front panels to said side edges of each of said absorbent chassis in said opposite waist region of said absorbent article to provide a refastenable joint;
- d) selectively cutting said continuous web of interconnected absorbent chassis into discrete absorbent articles;
- e) folding each of said discrete absorbent articles about a fold line extending in a lateral direction through said crotch region of said article thereby positioning said front panels and said back panels in a facing relationship; and
- f) connecting said front panels and said back panels together along a pair of laterally opposed side seams to define a waist opening and a pair of leg openings and provide said pant-like, refastenable, disposable absorbent article.

27. The absorbent article of claim 26 wherein said refastenably attaching includes refastenably engaging a fastener located on side margins of said front panels to said

exterior surface of each of said absorbent chassis in said other waist region to provide said refastenable joint.

28. The absorbent article of claim 27 wherein said fasteners are hook and loop type fasteners.

29. The absorbent article of claim 27 wherein said refastenably attaching includes ultrasonically bonding said side margins of said front panels to said side edges of said absorbent chassis in said other waist region to assist said fasteners in providing said refastenable joints.

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